

# 13th Conference of the European Sociological Association

(Un)Making Europe:  
Capitalism, Solidarities,  
Subjectivities

**ESA 2017**  
**ATHENS**  
**29.08**  
**01.09**



ABSTRACT BOOK

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Subjectivities



European  
Sociological  
Association



HELLENIC  
SOCIOLOGICAL  
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Athens | 29 August – 01 September 2017

ESA 13th Conference | (Un)Making Europe: Capitalism, Solidarities, Subjectivities |

<http://esa13thconference.eu/>

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(Un)Making Europe: Capitalism, Solidarities, Subjectivities  
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Europe can be made or unmade, and this is especially true since the 'Great Recession' of 2008. European society, and even the very idea of Europe, is under threat.

**First**, the inherent contradictions of **capitalism** are obviously stronger than we thought: Greece, where the emphatic idea of "Europe" originated, has experienced severe austerity measures; Europe has seen a deepening of neo-liberal politics, threats to what remains of the welfare state and increasing inequality. **Second, solidarities** are fragmented in and between societies across Europe. The new world economic crisis formed a context for both the constitution and the undermining of solidarities. On the one hand, from the Arab Uprisings to the various Occupy and Indignados movements – and their manifestations at the level of political parties – we have seen rebellions by citizens demanding political change. On the other hand, refugees fleeing wars have been denied human rights and their lives have been threatened by the closure of borders and the lack of a coordinated European strategy. **Third, subjectivities** are formed that do not only result in resistance and protest, but also in apathy, despair, depression, and anxiety. Authoritarianism, nationalism, racism, xenophobia, right-wing extremism, spirals of violence, and ideological fundamentalisms have proliferated throughout the world, including in Europe.

As a result, the promise of Europe and the geographical, political, and social borders of Europe have been unmade and this 'unmaking' poses a profound challenge for sociology and the social sciences more generally. It is in this context that the European Sociological Association's 2017 Conference takes place in Athens at the epicentre of the European crisis. The **underlying question** for the conference is:

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*How and where to should a sociology that matters evolve? How can sociology's analyses, theories and methods, across the whole spectrum of ESA's 37 Research Networks and various countries, be advanced in order to explain and understand capitalism, solidarities and subjectivities in the processes of the making, unmaking and remaking of Europe?*

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paper is aimed to challenge common assumptions on the problematic nature of migration and to reframe this latter as an integral part of the process of human, social and economic development.

### **The emotional functions of Muslim religion and their effects on inclusion**

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In current debates about processes of migration and integration the fear of Islamic extremism increases. There exist many worries about the question whether Muslim immigrants are able to integrate into historically Christian countries (e.g. Adida, Laitin and Valfort 2016). My paper emphasizes that it is necessary to develop a more differentiated view upon Muslim religion. Despite all fears about political radical Islam it is necessary to consider the emotional functions of Muslim religion – especially in processes of migration. These internal functions are strengthened in religious practices and in using spiritual-religious interpretation frames in interactions. The effects of these practices are described as pacification, reduction of stress, composure and the release of responsibility by Muslim immigrants in Germany. On an action level this enables different forms of agency. In that way the emotional side of Muslim religion makes inclusion possible.

### **Expressions of ethnic identities – exploring emotional articulations of belonging in minority families**

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Families embody some of the most intimate, but at the same time influentially collective sites for identity formation and for the transferral of emotional capital. However, research attempting to analyse how emotional capital and emotion practices frame the familial creation of feelings of ethnic belonging is scarce. Furthermore, as the need to understand the mechanics behind diverse societies' ethnic inequalities increases, it becomes vital to comprehend the ways in which ethnic belonging can be accompanied by symbolic violence and how equal distribution of emotional capital between different families might alleviate its effects.

Thus, it is most enlightening to examine how ties between ethnic minority family members form the setting for the generation of narrative discourse, imbued with emotives and both conscious and subconscious practices of identity construction. We claim that looking at the expressions of emotions in intergenerational contexts is of utmost importance when trying to understand how ethnic minorities reconstruct and create meaningful identity narratives beyond the reliance on individual experiences and characteristics. Our research shows that parents' emotional capital and the (un)expressed emotions in

stories told or exchanged in families influence the ways in which children incorporate parents' experiences, understandings and feelings of ethnic belonging as their own. Drawing on narrative interviews with Russian ethnic minority families in Estonia, it is exemplified how emotion practices stemming from emotional capital enhance and create the symbolic capital generated through specific ethnic and national affiliations.

Based on these findings, insights from the sociology of emotions can contribute to the study of ethnic identities.

### **RN11 | Session 01c Emotions, Civic Action and Social Movements I**

#### **Emotion and Body language in and against the “liberal” participation. Public speaking of farmer grassroots organizations in the transnational Roundtable on sustainable palm oil.**

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This communication relies on a movie sequence from a participative session in the transnational Roundtable of Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO). We took the video in a plenary session composed of around 800 participants, mainly European and Asian organisations, debating on sustainability issues to foster a global standard for sustainable palm oil. This sequence shows the moment when an Indonesian farmer took the floor to state very unknown concerns of family farmers and local communities affected by the expansion of palm oil plantations in Indonesia. Although considered important by the small farmers delegation, this public speaking was perceived as a failure by many of the other participants and was disqualified. For European participants, even for European NGO representatives who recognized that the content of the message was appropriate, this public speaking was perceived as “too emotional”. For Asian companies, it was seen as “impolite”. We used this video sequence and other ones showing other participants speaking in plenary sessions (firms, international NGOs, State representatives) in an interactive research. Indonesian farmers participating in the roundtable commented the different selected movie sequences. We also realized interviews with participants commenting the speech of the Indonesian farmer. This work was essential to reveal forms of emotions and body language that are disqualified in the liberal participation promoted in the Roundtable. Strong body emotion of people who reported on violations of their rights and the adverse conditions that they suffer related to their place-based attachments embarrassed non-rooted international community. This latter prefers a smooth body language in a way to avoid confrontation and to compose commonality through detached options of participants, which resulted in the exclusion of farmer and local community voices.